



## Developing a Healthy Body Image

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Developing a healthy body image is one of the most important things you can do to maintain a healthy mindset. It all starts from how you think of yourself, and when it comes down to it, you must ***accept yourself for the person that you are.***

It can surely be tough though. You're constantly being thrown images of people who are almost impossibly thin and this leads you to set unattainable goals for yourself. Since you can't reach these impossible goals, you can get easily discouraged. But there is good news!

### Changing Your Self Image

The good news is that, with the proper drive, you can ***change the way you think about yourself.*** Accept your current situation and set goals for yourself that you can actually attain. This sets you up for success and a healthy, enthusiastic attitude as well.

### Consider these steps on your path to change:

- 1. Accept yourself.** Accept yourself for who you are and know that it is good. If you look in the mirror and hear the voice inside your head saying negative things about you, change the subject to something positive. ***You're a beautiful being and you should love yourself.***
- 2. Avoid comparing yourself to others.** It's so easy to get caught up in comparing yourself to your friends and the models in the magazines. Everyone is different! We all have our own strengths and weaknesses, so make the most of what you've got!
- 3. Accept others.** Learning to accept others helps you more easily accept yourself. Pass out sincere compliments to others. ***If you're too harsh on others you tend to be too harsh on yourself as well.***

**4. Make an attainable goal.** If you do fall into an overweight or obese category, make an attainable weight loss goal for yourself. Focus on areas that you can improve, like portion size or exercise routines. Just don't judge yourself or expect yourself to lose weight too fast.

- Some people will just never be tiny no matter how much weight they lose; this goes back to that most important concept of accepting yourself.

**5. Ask for help.** If you're struggling with body image issues and the other tips don't seem to be helping, it's a good idea to ***seek out a support system***. Confide your true feelings to family and friends and let them help you reach your goals. You can even speak with counselors. You shouldn't feel embarrassed because they're trained to deal with these very issues.

### **Adopting a Positive Mindset**

One thing you can do to help develop a positive body image is master the art of reading and writing affirmations each day and in your times of need. Affirmations are short positive statements that you can repeat when necessary or write out for yourself to post in areas where you'll see them several times every day.

***Focus on your positive attributes.*** If you have beautiful eyes, post yourself a reminder about your beautiful eyes near the bathroom mirror. You might be struggling with weight loss goals, but you still have your beautiful eyes. When you hold onto a positive feeling, it gives you a drive and a glimmer of hope. This positive attitude will make it easier for you to reach your goals!